

Vendors cracking down, but teens still smoke

Teen smoking is on the rise. So is cancer.

Is anyone surprised?

Since a pack of cigarettes costs half of what it did 10 years ago, teenagers can afford to smoke. Instead of \$7 a hit, a pack costs \$3.50.

In dealing with cancer patients-in-training, let's get real: jack the price up and the percentage of teen smokers will decline.

While teens appear to be doing their utmost to learn to smoke, adults are just as adamant in trying to quit.

Last week I oversaw a sneaky little sting operation to see if stores in Whitchurch-Stouffville are still selling cigarettes to people younger than 19.

It marked my third tobacco sting. The first was five years ago and involved both Whitchurch-Stouffville and Uxbridge. Of 20 vendors, a test shopping teenager scored cigarettes in 13 stores. Three years ago, the exercise was repeated but only in Whitchurch-Stouffville. Nine out of 10 stores sold cigarettes to a baby-faced 17-year-old boy.

It appears as if the teens-buying-cigarettes situation is improving. A few days ago, two 16-year olds took turns entering 19 stores in Whitchurch-Stouffville to ask for a large pack of duMaurier Lights. In total, four sold cigarettes to the minors. Each purchase was smooth, taking less than three minutes.

Apparently, the chances of teens buying cigarettes increase when the clerk is a young male, while buying tobacco is the most difficult when the clerk is a middle-aged woman. Men and young female clerks sell tobacco to minors at about the same rate. This information came from the ones in the know: teenagers. It must be stressed that



Joan Ransberry

merchants are responsible for training their staff to obey the province's Tobacco Control Act.

Across York Region, a test of 111 tobacco vendors by the region's health services department showed 32 stores willing to sell tobacco to under-age test shoppers. York Region's compliance rate was 79 per cent, the same as in Whitchurch-Stouffville's.

The long arm of the law is touching illegal smoking. Last year, there were about 140 court convictions against three groups: people supplying cigarettes to minors, stores selling smokes to minors and teens smoking in prohibited places.

The fines are a joke. While we have the authority to slap a \$10,000 fine on a convicted merchant and a \$1,000 fine on a convicted teen, the courts handed out fines averaging \$180 to guilty store owners and \$50 fines to guilty teens. If fines are designed to be deterrents, I suggest we get a new designer.

A sad reality is nothing can be done about kids smoking on the streets or in parks. It's obvious to me that more kids are smoking on the streets in downtown Stouffville than ever before.

When I was a teen about 100 years

ago, a young girl smoking in public was called a tramp, while a cigarette-puffing boy was a punk. Times have changed. Since smoking is banned at the workplace and in restaurants, smoking outdoors is increasing. That explains

why so many teens look like tramps and punks.

Reality goes a step further: cigarette smoking is like prostitution; it's not illegal for children to buy cigarettes. It's just illegal to sell them.

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD NOTICE OF APPLICATION



RP-2000-0150
RP-2000-0162

Licence for an Amalgamated Electricity Distribution Company to Distribute Electricity and Leave for an Incorporated Holding Company to Acquire the Securities of the Amalgamated Electricity Distribution Company

The Ontario Energy Board (the "Board") is in receipt of applications proposing a series of transactions that would result in:

1. the purchase from the Town of Richmond Hill of all of the issued and outstanding shares of Richmond Hill Hydro Inc.;
2. the amalgamation of the electricity distribution companies operating in the Town of Aurora, the Town of Markham, the Town of Newmarket, annexed portions of the Townships of East Gwillimbury, King and Whitchurch, the Town of Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan into a single amalgamated electricity distribution company; and
3. the acquisition of all the securities of the amalgamated electricity distribution company by a holding company whose shares would be held by the Town of Aurora, the Town of Markham, the Town of Newmarket and the City of Vaughan.

The applications also seek related orders from the Board, including the licensing of the amalgamated electricity distribution company.

The Board has assigned file numbers RP-2000-0150 and RP-2000-0162 to the applications.

On January 22, 2001, the Director of Licensing referred the licence application for the amalgamated electricity distribution company to the Board so that all the related applications can be dealt with together.

If you wish to intervene in or observe either of these proceedings, or to comment on the Applications, you must write to the Board Secretary at the address set out below within 15 calendar days of the publication of this Notice, identifying the proceeding in which you wish to participate. Information on how to intervene, observe or comment can be obtained from the Board Secretary. If you wish to participate in the proceedings, copies of your letter must also be delivered or mailed to the municipalities at the addresses below.

Copies of the applications are available for inspection at the Board's offices and at the offices of the municipalities involved at the addresses set out below:

Ontario Energy Board
2300 Yonge Street
26th Floor
Toronto, Ont. M4P 1E4

Attn: Paul B. Pudge
Board Secretary

Toll Free: 1-888-632-6273
Fax: 416-440-7656

Town of Richmond Hill
225 East Beaver Creek Road
P.O. Box 300
Richmond Hill, Ont. L4C 4Y5

Attn: A.P. Crawford
Deputy Clerk

Tel: 905-771-2495
Fax: 905-771-2502

Town of Newmarket
395 Mulock Drive
P.O. Box 328, STN. Main
Newmarket, Ont. L3Y 4X7

Attn: Robert M. Prentice
Town Clerk

Tel: 905-895-5193, EXT. 237
Fax: 905-953-5100

Town of Markham
Anthony Roman Centre
101 Town Centre Blvd.
Markham, Ont. L3R 9W3

Attn: Sheila Birrell
Town Clerk

Tel: 905-475-4729
Fax: 905-479-7771

Town of Aurora
100 John West Way
Box No. 1000
Aurora, Ont. L4G 6J1

Attn: Bob Panizza
Town Clerk

Tel: 905-727-3123, EXT. 221
Fax: 905-841-3483

City of Vaughan
Civic Centre
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ont. L6A 1T1

Attn: John Leach
City Clerk

Tel: 905-832-8585, EXT. 8281
Fax: 905-832-8535

DATED AT Toronto
February 1, 2001
ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD
Peter H. O'Dell
Assistant Board Secretary

CORRECTION NOTICE

Due to an error in the February 8th edition of the Markham Economist & Sun/Stouffville Tribune, Sheraton Antiques ad should have read 0% interest, 12 equal monthly payments on approved credit. Total purchase price \$5,995+ applicable taxes.

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www.weewatch.com

Protecting our natural heritage

Jean Fau is a chief park warden for Parks Canada. He and his colleagues protect the plant and animal life in our national parks. They also help Canadians explore and enjoy these special places. This is just one of the hundreds of services provided by the Government of Canada.

For more information on government services:

- Visit the Service Canada Access Centre nearest you
- Visit www.canada.gc.ca
- Call 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)
- TTY/TDD: 1-800-465-7735

Canada